

URFMD003

URUGUAYAN TRACEABILITY SYSTEM

The Uruguayan system of traceability related to meat and meat products is handled by the General Department of Livestock Services, through two of its Divisions:

- Division for the Control of Herds and Livestock Movement (DICOSE)
- Division of Animal Industry (DIA)

DICOSE:

This office was created on 8 June 1973 and its duties were established by Law N° 14.165, dated 7 March 1974. Its main duties are:

1. To control the stocks and movement of bovine, ovines, swine and horses throughout the national territory.
2. To control the system of brands and marks.
3. To control the stocks of hides and wool and their movements throughout the national territory.

Control of cattle stock and movement

1. All the farmers throughout the country, as well as all slaughtering plants, are obliged by law to register with this Division: "Dicose number."
2. The registration is carried out submitting an affidavit with the following information:
 - Commercial name of the farm.
 - Number of livestock heads, classified by species and categories.
 - Total area of the farm.
 - Name of land holder, be it owner, lessee, tenant, etc.
3. Identification with a nine digit number (Dicose number.)
 - The first two digits correspond to the Department where the farm is located. (The country is divided into Departments, which are equivalent to provinces or states.)
 - The second two digits correspond to the Police District within the Department. (The Departments are divided into Police Districts.)
 - The last five numbers identify the farmer.

4. Document (waybill) of ownership and movement of animals.

All animals being moved or transported through the national territory must be accompanied by a document (waybill) containing the following information:

- Dicose number of the farm of origin of the animals.
- Dicose number of the place of destination of the animals, i.e., farm or slaughtering plant.
- Number of animals accompanied by the waybill, classified in categories (age, sex, etc.)
- Purpose of the movement of the animals: sale between farmers, sale to a slaughtering plant, grazing, etc.
- Itinerary to be followed.

5. The waybill is issued in four copies, whose destination is as follows:

- The original and first copy are carried by the person in charge of the transportation (truck driver, etc.) and accompany the animals. These copies must be stamped at the nearest police station to the place of destination. The original waybill is kept by the police, who send it to DICOSE's central offices, while the copy is sent to the place of destination.
- The owner of the animals (farm of origin) keeps the other two copies, which must be stamped at the nearest police station to the farm of origin. One of these copies is sent to DICOSE's central offices and the other is kept by the farmer as evidence.

6. DICOSE's central offices receive the original document and the third copy. Using a computerized system, the Division keeps track of the stocks held by each farmer, and the movements of the animals.

7. On the 30th of June, each year, all farmers submit an updated affidavit to DICOSE, declaring births, deaths, changes in land extension, etc.

8. The slaughtering plants must submit to DICOSE, on a monthly basis, an affidavit including the following information:

- Name of the owner of the slaughtering plant or abattoir.

- Number of animals slaughtered in the month, classified by category and numbers of the waybills accompanying the animals received for slaughter.
- Destination of the hides.
- Balance sheet of animals slaughtered and hides obtained in the month.

Control of marks and brands

In Uruguay, it is mandatory that all cattle be iron branded after weaning. This brand is proof of ownership and must appear in the waybills accompanying the animals.

The brands are valid at a national level and must be purchased by the farmers from DICOSE's offices, where an updated register of the sales and transfers is kept.

When the cattle is sold to another farmer, the latter must brand the animals with his own brand.

To brand animals without the waybill of ownership and movement is a crime penalized by the Criminal Code.

DICOSE grants and sells the marks and brands to the farmers, keeps track of the transfers and ownership modifications and adopts all the measures necessary to preserve the brands and avoid their alteration or tampering.

Control of hides and wool stocks

Hide traders must register with DICOSE and must regularly submit an affidavit stating stocks of hides and wool, as well as sales and movement to processing plants.

DIA:

The Division of Animal Industry, through its Official Veterinary Services in the slaughtering plants, controls the waybills accompanying animals to be slaughtered.

The Inspector checks that all the information appears in the document and registers part of it, such as day and time of arrival of the animals, Dicoose number of origin, location of the farm, and number of animals included in the waybill, classified by species and categories.

The animals are assigned a "herd number" and located in a specific pen. The herd number is painted on the animals and when the herd is entered into the plant to be slaughtered, it is accompanied by the pen card.

This system warrants that the official services know exactly that a particular herd was slaughtered on a certain plant on a given date, as well as the origin and movements of the herd and all other relevant information about it.

The system warrants the traceability of the meat to the day of production.